

FURTHER
OBSERVATIONS
UPON THE
WHITE HORSE
AND OTHER
ANTIQUITIES
IN
BERKSHIRE.
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF
WHITELEAF-CROSS
IN
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

As also of The RED HORSE in Warwickshire,
and some other Monuments of the same kind.

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THE
FURTHER
OBSERVATIONS

OF THE
WHITE HORSE

AND OTHER
MATTERS

RELATIVE TO THE
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FURTHER
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WHITE HORSE &c.

IF we would be thoroughly acquainted with former ages, and without it, I fear, we shall never make a right judgment of the present, we must search into their History and Monuments, whatever they are, and be content with such informations as they will afford us. And it cannot, I presume, be thought an irrational amusement, to trace the progress of arts and sciences through their several stages; and to note their origin, declension, and emergence; for this it must be owned is the business in effect. If some ages are more obscure than others, destitute of History, and inelegant as to monuments, their fate is much to be lamented, and the employment here, we confess, is uninviting. But the Monuments, however rude and barbarous, still have their use, and contribute equally to the end proposed.

In England books and records seem to have been thoroughly examined; and as far as these will carry us back, the more early part of our History has been traced out by several able hands. Though it must be confessed, that the best appearance

it bears is very jejune and imperfect: and that those who have attempted to supply it's defects, have been obliged to have recourse to fiction and fable. Nothing therefore remains, but to correct, confirm, or illustrate what has been already written; and this cannot otherwise be done, than by comparing it with coeval monuments.

In this respect our antiquaries have laboured with a diligence beyond that of any other nation; and their endeavours have been attended with such success, that by some it may be thought, the subject is quite exhausted. Nevertheless the hidden monuments daily brought to light sufficiently convince us of the contrary; and that even the more conspicuous ones have not been so carefully handled as they ought, the monument before us will ever be a standing witness.

Antiquity is a vast ocean, itself known but to few, and it's bounds to none. The first adventurers on it have light upon golden mines and a richer coast: but their followers have likewise found the way to discoveries of equal benefit to mankind. The former have had greater opportunities and better fortune; but the attempts of the latter are far from being useless, nor are they perhaps less difficult.

The White Horse is an antiquity of a class that had hitherto escaped the observation of the curious: so far from being taken notice of by our antiquaries, that it's existence had in a manner been denied by "one of the greatest character among them. Here then, without pretending to the skill and experience of other adventurers in this way, I flatter myself that I have steered a right course. And whether the discovery shall

a BERCHERIA frumenti ferax, ubi in vallem subsidet, quam à nescio qua ALBI EQUI forma in candicante colle imaginata, The Vale of White Horse vocant. Camden. Britannia in Attrebatiiis.

be thought of any importance to the world or not ; yet I cannot but look upon it as a piece of good fortune happening to myself.

At the same time I am prepared to meet with the common fate of travellers ; to have my account for a while suspected of romance : still trusting that a little better acquaintance with things of this nature, the testimony of other travellers, and some new discovery, may by degrees wear off the air of improbability, if there is any, and reconcile the world to my opinion.

If there are any who can think so injuriously of this noble monument, as to conceive it to be wholly without design or meaning, the work of Shepherds, or other people of much leisure, and little art ; they shall enjoy their notions unmolested for me. It is not for such that I undertake this second task : but to remove the scruples of the learned and ingenuous ; to answer the demands of those friends, who think I have not been full and explicit enough : and in short to give them, if possible, the same satisfaction which I have gained to myself.

Before I proceed let me bespeak the reader's candid attention to what I am about. The concurrence of the learned is what, I suppose, every author sets out with an expectation of ; and if I fail in this, I only undergo the fate of thousands. But should it appear that I am in the right, I hope I may expect their thanks ; and if in the wrong, not despair of their forgiveness. The difficulties I have to struggle with, may justly plead for favourable allowances. Where History is silent, and the monuments don't speak for themselves, demonstration cannot be expected ; but the utmost is conjecture supported by probability. If therefore any expressions have escaped me, which seem to forestal the readers judgment, and to pronounce too
perem-

peremptorily upon the age and meaning of the monument; they will be considered as words of course, and flowing from one, who was fully persuaded of the truth of what he wrote, and as well satisfied almost, as if he had had demonstration on his side.

Asbdown. The first thing that came under consideration in my former ^a essay, and upon which most of what followed necessarily depended, was the place where Alfred and his brother King Ethelred obtained a compleat victory over the Danes, A.D. 871. After says it was at *Ærcebun*, *Mons Fraxini*, or *Asbdown*; a place well known in the Saxon times, but since hard to be discovered, nor universally agreed upon, by our Antiquaries. Talbot as I shewed from ^b Leland took it to be *Asbdown Forest* in Suffex; ^c Somner *Asbdown* in Essex; but neither of these the too great distance from Reading, the head quarters of the Danes at that time, will admit of. ^d Bishop Kennet once thought it to be *Asbendon* in Buckinghamshire, but mentions his opinion with so much diffidence, that it is plain, he intended to lay no great stress upon it: for he clearly saw, that from the progress of the Danish arms, it must be somewhere in West-Sex. The Right Reverend and very learned editor of the *Saxon Annals*, to whose authority no antiquary need be ashamed to subscribe, had before placed it at *Aston* near Wallingford in Berkshire; and this opinion has been followed by later writers.

Nothing besides the necessity of pursuing truth, shall ever

^a Letter to Dr Mead concerning some Antiquities in Berkshire. Pag. 20.

^b Joannis Lelandi Collectan. 8vo. Oxon. 1715. Vol. III. Pag. 194.

^c Glossarium Anglo-Saxon. Fol. Oxon. 1659. in Voce *Ærcebune*.

^d Parochial Antiquities of Burcester, Ambrosden &c. 4to. Oxford 1696. Pag. 35.

^e See the Index of Places names at the End of the *Saxon Annals*.

prevail with me publickly to declare my dissent from any author, much less from one of so great character, as his Lordship. But it was then and still is my opinion, that the battel was fought not far from a town called *Ashbury*, on the western extremity of Berkshire.

To support this opinion, I shewed that the old name *Ashdown* was still preserved in that neighbourhood by the tradition of Shepherds. That there was the seat of the Right Honourable the Lord Craven called in old writings *Ashdown Park*. And that *Ashbury* itself was formerly called *Ashdown* in charters granted to Glastonbury Abby. The Leiger book of this monastery is now preserved in the Bodleian Library. The deeds relating to the several estates, are here very fairly register'd under proper heads; and the book itself seems to be about Four hundred years old. Under the title *Ashbury*, we find the first charter by me mentioned, of *Ethelwolph* to Dundan, which

^a MSS. Empt. ab Anton. a Wood N. r.

^b *CARTA ÆTHELWOLPH FACTA DUNDAN MINISTRO SUO DE ATSHEDOUNE.*
Regnante imperpetuo domino nostro Ihesu Christo omnia speciosa regna huius labentis vite, regnorumque dispensatores cum velocitate deficiunt, & cuncta que videntur, cassabunda & moritura sunt; que hic non videntur, eterna sunt; ideo caducis & vanis rebus jugiter mansura gaudia mercanda sunt. Qua de re Ego Æthelwolphus domino largiente Occidentalium Saxonum Rex pro unice anime mee & animum [sic f. peccaminum] meorum remissione, aliquam agri partem, id est, Decem Cassatos, in loco qui dicitur *AISSHEDOUNE* cum consilio & licentia Episcoporum, ac Principum meorum *DUDAN* [sic] ministro meo in jus proprium habendi & fruendi visa converte, [sic f. manente] & post obitum illius qualicumque heredi, prout illi placeat, relinquendum, devota mente largitus sum. Hancque libertatem in predicto *Asello* [f. Agello] nos omnes unanimiter conscripsimus atque donavimus, ut ab omnium fiscalium tributum [f. tributorum] grandine, [f. gravamine] necnon passu Episcoporum, simulque Principum, & exactorum, & penaliū rerum, & furis comprehensione, & ab omnium secularium servitutum molestia secunda & innumerus, [f. immunis] eternaliter permaneat. Scripta est hec cartula Anno ab Incarnatione *XPI DCCCXL*. Indictione tertia in villa regali que appellatur *Hamptone*, hiis & consensientibus & subscribentibus quorum nomina prenotata cernentibus clare patescunt. X Ego Æthelwolph Rex predicta possessionem statuta signo Crucis *XPI* sic subscribo. X Ego Æthelfstan Eps consensu, signo Crucis sic subscribo. cum multis aliis. Chartularium Monast. Glaston. MS. Fol. 245. a.

because

because omitted in the Monasticon I here give at the bottom of the page. It is dated as I observed before A.D. 840. and here is express mention made of *Ayshdoun*. The next is the charter of King Edred to Count Edric A.D. 947, published in the *a* Monasticon, wherein is this clause, *Ubi vulgus prisca relatione vocitat at Ayshdoun*. Therefore the name *Ayshdoun* seems to have grown obsolete about this time, and to have given place to the more modern one of *Ashbury*. And I am confirmed in this notion by another *b* charter of the same King Edred dated a few years later, viz. A.D. 953, containing a grant to his servant Ælfrige and his wife Eadgiva, of certain lands *æt Ærcebupuh*. The above-mentioned lands of Edric were granted to the monastery by himself in the time of Dunstan the Abbat. After these come other later deeds, in which the place is from thenceforth always called *Ashbury*. To this evidence from charters I added the corroborating circumstances of Camps and Barrows, and other funeral monuments in that neighbourhood, which I imagined would put the thing beyond dispute. Notwithstanding which, I desire to be thought not at all bigotted to an opinion: but if any author shall discover another *Ashdown* in West-Sex, whose distance from Reading will correspond with the history, and which will afford us any marks of a battle; I shall be content to give up this argument, with every thing that is built upon it.

*Cuckhamsley Hill
and Aston.*

There is one thing which seems to bear hard upon my hypothesis, of *Ashbury* being the place of battle; and that is it's situation with regard to *Cuckhamsley Hill*. It being said in the *Annals*

a Monasticon Anglicanum. Fol. Lond. 1661. Vol. 2. pag. 842.

b Cl. Humf. Wanley Catal. MSS. Saxon. Fol. Oxon. 1703. p. 235.

under the year 1006. ^a *That the Danes came to Wallingford, and entirely destroyed that place, and from thence went along Ashdown to Cwichelmes-Low; now thought to be Cuckhamsley hill.*

What is called in the Maps *Cuckhamsley Hill* is a large barrow standing on a wide plain, overlooking the Vale of White Horse, and in the midway between Wallingford and Ashbury: by the Common people called *Cuchinflow*, *Scuchinflow*, and *Scuchamere*. This passage therefore seems to bring Ashdown within a very narrow compass, (for Cuchinflow is not above seven or eight miles from Wallingford) and it may be thought there could be no great difficulty in finding it. But if I should enquire where it is, and should be answered, at Aston directly in the road between Wallingford and Cuchinflow, I must take the liberty to say, I should be as little satisfied, as If I had been told Blubery or any other town lying in the same direction. Aston in short has no pretension to be the place, besides that of distance between these two points. For the name itself, I shewed, did not favour that opinion, *The East Town*, for it implies no more, being in signification as widely distant from *Ashdown*, or *Ash Hill*, as can well be imagined.

I take it for granted, because I think it would be mere cavilling to dispute it, that *Ærcebun* mentioned in the foregoing passage of the Annals, is the same *Ærcebun* where the battle was fought A. D. 871. And therefore think I had reason to doubt, whether *Epichelmer-leape* could be the same place, which is now called *Cuchinflow*. For though I grant it to agree very well with the Saxon name; yet if I shew Ashdown to lie in the line beyond it; the Danes could not first pass from Walling-

^a And ferðon þa to ƿealingaƿorða. 7 þet eall ƿorƿelðon. 7 ƿænton him andlang Ærcebune Cƿichelmer-hlæpe gerohton. Chron. Saxon. 4to. Oxon. 1692. Pag. 135.

ford through Ashdown, in their way to Cuchinflow. We may sometimes be mistaken in comparing the new and old names of places. And though we can fix upon some places with tolerable certainty; yet we cannot answer for their distances agreeing with others, whose situation is less certain. I have produced authorities enough from books and monuments, to shew where Ashdown lies, and where the battle was fought: and it was my unhappiness rather than my fault, if I was not able to ascertain the site of Epichelmeyleape; which is but once mentioned in the Annals and so less liable to be found out.

Whilst I was under this uncertainty, I supposed it to mean some town in North Wiltshire or Gloucestershire, but am now obliged to retract this opinion, having found in *Dr Hickes's Thesaurus* the record of a County Court held at Epichelmeyleape in the time of King Ethelred. The learned author indeed does not tell us in what County, but it appears to me from the names of towns mentioned in the record, that it could be no other than Berkshire. If it could be shewn that any town stood formerly at Cuchinflow, with a Church and Churchyard, for there Sr William Dugdale tells us these County Courts were usually held, there would be good reason to think, this was the place. Nor will I now deny it; not only the name so exactly answering to the old one; but no place being better situated for that purpose. And if there was no Town, perhaps Tents, Booths and other temporary expedients were used for shelter against the weather, during the time of Court.

^a See the Letter to Dr Mead concerning some Antiquities &c. Pag. 20.

^b Cemote æt Cpichelmeyleape &c. *Conventu ad Cwichelmes-leawam aeto*. To determine a dispute about some lands lying in Haccebupna, Yulfamepa, Bpadanfelba, Deccetta, i.e. Hagbourn, Wulmere, Bradfield and Datchet, towns in Berkshire. Cl. Hickes. Diss. Epist. ad D. Barthol. Shower. Pag. 5.

^c See his book entitled *Origines Juridicales*. Fol. Lond. 1671. p. 31, 32.

But

But though I allow *Cuchinflow* to be the ancient *Epichelmerlæpe*, yet no one can expect that I should leave *Ashdown* to shift for itself, whose site is in my opinion so much clearer. This is a difficulty no way to be got over, but either by supposing the above-mentioned passage in the *Annals* to be a little confused, which is frequently the case, and that it is capable of another meaning, than it seems to bear at first sight; as that *The Danes leaving Wallingford*, traversed the Vale, and came to *Ashbury*, and then came back again, along *Ashdown*, or the Rudge Way, to *Cuchinflow*: or else by supposing that the Ridge of Hills between *Wallingford* and *Cuchinflow* is likewise called *Ashdown*; or lastly by transposing the two names, and instead of saying they went through *Ashdown* to *Cuchinflow*, that they went from *Cuchinflow* to *Ashdown*; and then the difficulty vanishes at once. This is not improbable, since there is a battel mentioned immediately afterwards at *Kennet* in *Wiltshire*, which is much nearer to *Ashdown* than *Cuchinflow*.

The White Horse. When I first saw the White Horse, I could not hesitate to pronounce it an antiquity of the Saxon age, tho' I was sometime at a loss for it's author; and must own, that I formed several conjectures, before I hit upon, what appeared to me to be the right. There were two of our Saxon princes prior to *Alfred*, who might seem entitled to it, *Cerdic* the West Saxon and *Offa* the Mercian.

Whosoever shall choose the former of these, will have in my judgment greatly the disadvantage; tho' the funeral monument just under the Horse, which I attribute to the *Pendragon* slain by *Cerdic*, may at first sight favour that opinion. The Horse,

^a *Cerdic* came into England A. D. 495. and died A. D. 534. *Offa* began his reign A. D. 755. and died A. D. 794. Annal. Saxon.

whatever some may think of it, is a monument too polite for that age, and that people. A people strangers to good arts, just arrived from a barbarous country, can never be thought capable of designing a figure, that was to be surveyed at such a distance, and is executed in such a masterly manner. And if they were able to draw the figure of an Horse, however rudely in their banner, it is all the merit, I can prevail with myself to allow them.

Cerdic's character is that of a Souldier rough with war. He was in all probability the same enemy to civil Arts, as his contemporaries of the Northern hive, the Vandals. These were not cultivated in his own country; nor could he learn them here, had he been desirous of it, from a people sunk perhaps into the same degree of barbarity with himself.

It will be no easy matter to find proofs to this purpose, from the customs of the first Saxons. Anniversary or other festivals, such as that of Scouring the Horse, which I suppose to be in memory of a victory, could not well be instituted under unsettled states, and Kings, whose whole business was to proceed on their conquests. Equally hard will it be, to produce a monument of the same kind, which has any pretence to be of this age, or near it. At least I can recollect of their publick works, only funeral monuments for their great men slain in battle, and fortifications for the security of their troops.

All true politeness seems to have been buried with the Roman majesty in this Isle; nor can we trace any symptoms of its revival, till the time of Ethelbert, and the coming of Austin the Monk; when a correspondence with Italy, and the more southern countries, naturally introduced an acquaintance with literature. The prevailing superstition of that, and the following ages, was so far from being a detriment to good arts, that they

they may be thought in great measure to have been kept alive by it. The genius or taste of our Saxon princes and Nobles distinguished itself by sumptuous buildings, monasteries and churches, with their several ornaments of pictures and images. And though the arts had then sadly degenerated from the ancient Roman elegance, yet England shared no more than the common fate of all Europe: and in Offa's reign, a prince great both in arts and arms, it may seem to have vied with the most polite countries, in producing the best masters. Witness some of the coins of that King, which breath a spirit and design, vastly exceeding those of his predecessors, and successors in the Saxon line; and are no way inferiour to the best of his contemporaries.

This age, if I may be allowed to judge, bids much fairer than the former for the workmanship of the Horse, and History itself may seem to favour it. The author, whoever he was, quoted from an old book by "Mr Camden, tells us, *That after Kenwulf was overthrown, whatsoever lay under his jurisdiction from the town of Wallingford in the South part from Ickenild-street as far as Essebury [or Ashbury] and in the North part as far as the River Thames, King Offa seized upon.* This fragment of history, I must own, made me once conjecture, that the Horse was the work of Offa; and set up either as a Trophy of his Victory, or the boundary of his territories. The neighbourhood of Ashbury may seem to countenance the latter opinion, as well as the town of Uffington, where he has left his name. But it could not well be designed for a Trophy, because Kenwulf was overthrown at ^b Bensington in Oxfordshire, some fif-

^a See Mr Camden's Britannia in Berkshire.

^b Chronicon Saxonum. 4to. Oxon. 1692. A. D. 785. Pag. 61.

teen miles from this place: and perhaps a ditch or bank may be thought a more proper boundary, and more suited to the age of Offa: such is that, I^a mentioned before, beginning from Sagbury castle and running for several miles eastward, which in all likelihood was made by him upon this occasion. Besides whoever considers the Horse with attention, will I believe, rather suppose it designed to distinguish Saxons from some other people, than a mark of distinction between Saxons and Saxons, because, I presume, it was common to them all alike. And this leads me to enquire, what was the Saxon Arms or Standard.

*The Saxon Standard
a Horse.*

To prevent all occasion of cavilling, it will be proper to premise, that I take the liberty of using the words *Standard* and *Arms* synonymously. The former, from being a necessary part of the military apparatus, having in my opinion as good a right to be called *Arms*, as those inferiour badges, by which particular persons chose to distinguish themselves, and their followers in time of war; and which by degrees became the marks of their respective families. I may add, that the Standard does not seem to have been less hereditary among princes, than modern arms among private gentlemen, nor to have been altered without some very good reason. As appears from the practice of all States, in their constant use of the same Standard through many generations.

The ancient Standards of all nations demanded a sort of religious veneration; the^b Device being commonly something to

^a See the Letter to Dr Mead concerning some Antiquities &c. Pag. 55.

^b *Nulla regio cui nihil insignium saltem in signis militaribus. Et hæc cum publica essent, vel à tutelari regis nomine, vel ab ANIMALI EI SACRO, à re quapiam loci propria, aut capitis auspicianti, communive genio aridente deducebant, fore sic sibi secundum in praeliis rati.* Cl. Hen. Spelman. *Aspilogia* Fol. Lond. 1654. Pag. 7.

which

which they paid a more than ordinary regard, and upon which they superstitiously depended in time of war. History furnishes us with nothing which the Germans held in greater veneration, next to their Gods, than their Sacred White Horses. These they believed to be the servants of their Gods; from these they drew their presages of good and bad fortune, before they undertook any enterprize, as we are assured upon the testimony of ^a Tacitus, and ^a Saxo Grammaticus. And what better omen of Victory could they place at the head of their armies, than the Oracle which they consulted in time of war?

It must here be observed, that *Saxony*, or *Saxland*, tho' it now signify only a part of the Empire, yet antiently comprehended the whole: and He whom we now call *Emperor of Germany*, was formerly stiled ^b *Keyser* [or *Cæsar*] of *Saxland*; and that our Historians when they speak of the Germans, make use of the term *Old-Saxons*, perhaps in counterdistinction to the new Colony of that people planted in Britain.

From ^a Bede's account we may gather, that the General of these Old-Saxons, for they had no King, was in power not unlike the Roman Dictator. He was chosen from among the Nobles by lot, while the exigencies of their State required such an Officer, but when those ceased, he returned to his former station. And therefore it cannot easily be presumed that the

^a See the quotations from these authors in the Letter to Dr Mead. Pag. 28, 29.

^b *Ðam Carepe of Sexland. Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1006. Se Kayepe of Sexland. Id. A. D. 1129.*

^c *Eald-Seaxe i. e. Antiqui Saxones, Eald-Saxones. See Bede, Asser, Chron. Saxon. &c.*

^d *Non enim habent Regem iidem Antiqui Saxones, sed Sarrapas plurimos suæ genti præpositos, qui ingruente belli articulo mittunt equaliter sortes, & quemcunque sors ostenderit, hunc tempore belli Ducem omnes sequuntur, & huic obtemperant. Peractio autem bello, rursus æqualis potentie omnes sunt Sarrapa. Bedæ Hist. Eccles. Lib. V. c. 10.*

General would take upon him to alter the National Standard at pleasure.

Nevertheless if some persons will still without any grounds assert, that each chief chose a different Standard, and that Hengist in particular chose one in allusion to his name; they must allow what has been constantly averred by the writers of the Saxon affairs, and was never yet denied by any one, that it was a Horse: and most probable it is, that it was a White One; since Witikind the Great, whose pedigree all authors derive from Hengist, did without dispute bear a White Horse. This indeed he is said by ^a Krantzius not to have done till after his conversion to Christianity, having till that time born a Black One. But those who are acquainted with the history of Armory, know very well, that it was the custom of the Age when Krantzius wrote, as well as before, for authors to give reasons for the several bearings of Arms, full of fancy and superstition; and to find a sort of mystical meaning in every Symbol. Witikind's baptism, was, as they very rightly judged, the most remarkable occurrence of his life; and therefore they seem to have adjusted his Arms to that critical time. From these allegorizers it is, that the Story has since found place in history, from whence it has descended to Poets, and ^b Painters, and even to the ^c Civil Lawyers, where it has lost nothing of it's former embellishments.

^a *Armorum insignia, quæ militaribus, ut sit, signis præferebat, PULLUM EQUINUM habebat ATRUM: sed placuit regi [Witichindo] postquam de tenebris gentilium errorum pervenit in Lucem Veritatis, ut CANDIDUM acciperet, eaque vetustissima Saxonie Arma.* Alb. Krantzius Saxonia Lib. II. c. 24.

^b Amongst the Paintings in the Royal Palace at Turin, Witichind is represented receiving the White Horse in a Shield, from his Godfather Charles the Great.

^c *Hujus Equi colorem Witikindo post receptum baptisma Carolus non solum mutavit, sed & nomen aliud imposuit. Pro Atro enim Equo Album in campo rubro absque frenis & ephippio salientem concessit, nec amplius prisco nomine Ludgerum, sed Witikindum appellari voluit, ut ex sacro renatus fonte,*

That the White Horse then was Witikind's Badge, I can readily allow; but that he bore it as the badge of his Christianity, I can by no means believe; because, as 'I shewed before, the inhabitants of the Isle of Rugen, which was ' part of Witikind's territories, for some centuries after his death, preserved the old custom, of presaging by a White Horse. 'Tis true their religion was a mixture of Paganism and Christianity, but to which of the two this custom ought to be referred, it is easy enough to determine.

We cannot be at a loss for the posture of Witikind's Horse, tho' perhaps with some little variation; because it has been so religiously preserved in the Arms of his descendants. The Counts of Oldenburg bear it quarterly; the Elector of Cologne bears it as the mark of Westphalia; the present Royal Family of Great Britain, has restored it to our Arms, as Dukes of Brunswick; and the Dukes of Brunswick Wolphenbuttle have transferred it from their Shield to the place of the Crest. These all bear the White Horse current from the sinister part of the shield; but the House of Savoy from the dexter part, and in a

te, omni ex parte Candidus esset. Theod. Hoepingius De Armorum prisco & novo jure. Fol. Noriberg. 1642. Cap. VI. §. 698. Pag. 342. Nigro hunc colore primitus à Saxonie Ducibus delatum fuisse, omnes perhibent, ut indicent scilicet fortissimos & animosissimos bellatores esse, qui difficillime frenum jugumque admittant. Inveniuntur enim Nigri Equi nulla alba nota insigniti, ac fere indomiti, quibus ad generosum animum & freni impatiensem significandum Pulli Nigri præ spadibus & glaucis, (qui nigredinem albedini admixtam habent, ita tamen ut nigredo superet, & ob id domitu faciliores) digmate commodior haberi non potuit testera. Hunc ita acceptum Carolus Magnus Saxones domans, ac Christianæ fidei sacris initiis, in Album convertit, quo ostenderet, se pervicacem superbiam & effrenem licentiam, qua perpetuo recalcitrabant, nec rectorem ferebant, moderari velle: sic tamen ut generosum animum & ejus symbolum retinerent, sed mutato colore temperatores ac faciliores ad regendum se pollicerentur. Idem. Pag. 343.

a Saxo Grammat. Hist. Danica Fol. Soræ. 1644. Lib. XIV.

b Witichindus ob rerum gestarum celebritatem MAGNUS cognominatus, Rex Saxonum Dux Angarie, Princeps Rugiæ, & Dynasta Iltenburgi. Eliæ Reufneri Genealogia inclyti stemmatis Witichindæi. Fol. Jenæ. 1597.

C

posture

posture something more erect than the others. Whence this difference of bearing the Horse arose, is not easily accounted for, but in the oldest picture which I have seen of Witikind, given us by ^a one who professedly wrote his life, he bears both the Black and White Horse current from the dexter part, as in our monument.

Whosoever considers the Saxon White Horse, as described in these Arms ^b running at liberty, and without any marks of restraint, will find no difficulty in believing it to be the very same with the Sacred White Horse of the Germans described by Tacitus.

The only question then with me is, When this White Horse ceased to be the Standard of our Saxon ancestors? For tho' they came over hither in different parties, yet I am as much perswaded that all the descendants of Woden at that time bore the White Horse; as that the several families abovementioned, who derive their pedigrees from Witikind, bear it at present. That of the Counts of Oldenburg excepted, which I think is extinct.

Authors I know have given each of the Seven Kingdoms a different banner, but I fear upon no very good grounds, and which may be justified from antiquity. Authentick history I may venture to say is not so particular as to give us the difference. It is more reasonable to think, that tho' they might have several devices in their subordinate banners, yet the White Horse was the principal cognisance of the Saxons, as the Eagle was of the Romans. If it will be thought, that a different ban-

^a Elias Reufner. Geneal. Inclyt. stem. Witichind. as above. See likewise Nicol. Reufner. Icones Imp. &c. Saxon. cum elogiis. Fol. Jenæ. 1597.

^b *Alumnus in nemoribus Equi — Candidi & nullo mortali opere contacti.* Tacitus de Moribus Germanorum.

EQVVS WITIKINDEVS.



p. 616.



p. 589.

Comes Oldenburgicus.
Spener Hist Insig.

Coloniensis Archiepiscopus.
Spener Hist Insig.



p. 397.



p. 328.

Mag. Brit. Rex.

Brunsvic. Guelph. Dux.
Spener Hist Insig.

Sabaudia Dux.
Ashm. Gart. p. 714.



ner was necessary to distinguish each prince from his enemy during the wars among themselves: I answer that each banner might be sufficiently distinguished without injury to the main figure, or White Horse. And the Colour of the Field for instance, the most glaring distinction, may be diversified more than enough for the whole Heptarchy. Whosoever contended for sovereignty over the others, and this was the occasion of most of their wars, would not easily quit his pretensions to the original Saxon Arms: and the West Saxons in particular, to whom the rest at last submitted, had the best title to them, notwithstanding what later authors have been pleased to say to the contrary.

When therefore we find the Horse, or, if you please, the White Horse, to have been the banner of the Ancient Saxons: that it was particularly brought into Britain by the first Saxon Generals who came over hither: that it continued to be the banner of Saxony with those who were left behind: and was used by their succeeding Generals, Dukes or Kings, as they were afterwards called; and we have no reason to think it was discontinued in England: When we discover moreover, in the known territories of the West Saxon Kings, the Monument of a Horse, which tradition has constantly called a White one; formed

a A learned writer to whose judgment and candour I must always acknowledge myself in a particular manner indebted, has furnished me with the following remark. *Whatever opinion the reader may entertain of it's [The White Horse] original; it is certainly a work of great antiquity. In an Age, when neither such works, nor enquiries concerning them were produced, it is mentioned, as a well known monument; as is evident from the following record, for which I am beholden to a person [Mr. George Holmes] whose friendship I shall ever honour and esteem.*

Oxon }
Berks } *Claus. 42. E. 3. m. 6. dorso.*

Gerard de L'Isle tient en la Vale de WHITE HORSE 1. Fee.

Answer to a Scandalous Libel entitled, The impertinence and imposture of modern Antiquaries display'd &c. 4to. Lond. 1740.

after

after such a manner, as shews it was intended for a signal, very remarkable and visible, to the neighbouring country; and which is allowed by all true antiquaries to be incontestably of the Saxon Age: what can we conclude from all this, but that the White Horse was the banner or arms of the West Saxon Kingdom? This then is the opinion, which I have deliberately embraced; nor do intend to relinquish, but upon better reasons, than have as yet been brought against it.

The Device of the Banner commonly allotted to the West Saxon Kingdom is a Dragon; which, I presume, is founded entirely upon what Henry Huntingdon has related of King Cuthred in his war with Ethelbald the Mercian A. D. 752; where it is said, *‘Ethelhun that Kings Standardbearer, so he is pleased to call him, bore the Golden Dragon as his ensign at the battle of Burford: a punctilio which our ancient Saxon Annalists, who delighted in simplicity and plain narration, always omit; and which would never have been inserted, but by one who thought a battle could not well be described without it. Henry Huntingdon is an author to be read with caution; he often*

a Ethelhun præcedens Westsaxonenses, regis insigne, DRACONEM scilicet AUREUM, gerens, transforavit vexilliferum hostilem. H. Huntingdon. Hist. Lib. IV. Pag. 341.

b For this I shall give you a much better authority than my own, namely that of Mr Milton. Hitherto, says he, has been collected, what there is of certainty, with circumstance of time and place, to be found register'd, and no more than barely register'd in Annals of best note; without describing after Huntingdon, the manner of those battles and encounters, which those who compare and can judge of books, may be confident he never found any current author he had to follow. Hist. of England. 4to. Lond. 1670. A.D. 527. Yet from hence to the Danish invasion it will be worse with us destitute of Bede. Left to obscure and blockish Chronicles, whom Malmsbury and Huntingdon (for neither they than we had better authorities of those times) ambitious to adorn the History, make no scruple oftentimes, I doubt, to interline with conjectures and surmises of their own. Idem A.D. 731. And concerning this very fight between Ethelbald and Cuthred; Huntingdon, says he, as his manner is to comment upon the Annal Text makes a terrible description of that fight between Cuthred and Ethelbald, and the prowess of Ethelhun, but so affectedly, and therefore suspiciously, that I hold it not worth rehearsal. Id. Pag. 175.

uses

uses a poetical license of embellishing his subject according to his own fancy, without the least warrant from the Saxon Annals, from whence he copies. As this is notorious to every one who reads him; so it occasions matter of wonder to me, that Antiquaries of great name should in this case allow so much weight to his single testimony. Whereas I can easily bear with some others of a lower class, who have run headlong into a discussion of this question, without pretending to know any thing more of the matter, than what they have borrowed from modern authorities, and this too at second hand.

The Dragon was the Standard of the Parthians, Dacians, and Scythians, as well as of the Romans; but it can with no manner of certainty be said to have been used in England, till after the Norman Conquest. And if we may be permitted to follow the opinion of the most learned and judicious antiquary of the French nation, The Dragon belonged to our English Kings, as being the hereditary badge of the Dukes of Normandy. At the latter end of the Twelfth Century, when Huntingdon wrote, we have reason to think it was a Royal Banner, since then it is said to have been used by our Kings in their wars with the infidels: and this, I am inclined to think, was Huntingdon's only reason for allotting it to Cuthred.

Though it may be a question, when, and by whom, our Horse on the Hill was made; yet that it was designed to represent *The Kings Arms*, I believe most people are by this time convinced;

a *Musa Signa sunt Aquila, Dracones.* Veget. de Re Militari &c. Lib. III. Cap. 5.

b Du Fresne Glossar. Med. & Infim. Latinitatis. Fol. Lut. 1678. Vol. 2. p. 175.

c *Regium illud apud Anglos Vexillum Draconis habens cum capite auro effigiem, quod vicinis expertum, & pagani sub Ricardo I. in ultramarinis gentibus terribile fuit.* Mr Camden quotes this passage from Gervasius Tilbariensis MS. See the Britannia in Cornwall. And Du Fresne in his Glossary more correctly under the word DRACO.

and those who are not, I must leave at their liberty, to think what else they please of it.

*When the White Horse
ceased to be the Saxon
Standard.*

Perhaps it would go a good way towards determining the dispute; if we could, as I before observed, discover, when the White Horse ceased to be the Saxon Standard. Here authors are silent, and the truth is not to be come at, but by Conjecture at present. In this uncertainty, though I may expose myself once more to the lash of my enemies, yet I shall not be afraid to give my opinion, that the reign of Alfred was the very time.

Though it might be an innovation of some importance; yet when we consider the many publick regulations, which that prince made for the better in our laws and customs. In the forms of judicature; in the methods of disciplining the Souldiery and Artificers; we shall find no reign more likely for such a change than this. To which when we add his singular piety, and superstitious regard for relicks, according to the custom of that age; no one can think it unlikely that he should lay aside the old pagan device, or White Horse, and assume that of the Cross. That the Cross was King Alfred's Arms, I find asserted by ^b persons whose authority I dare not question. And to af-

^a *Interea tamen Rex inter bella & presentis vite frequentia impedimenta, nec non Paganorum infestationes, & quotidianas corporis infirmitates, & regni gubernacula regere, & omnem venandi artem agere; aurifices & artifices suos omnes, & falconarios, & accipitrarios, canicularios quoque docere; & ædificia supra omnem antecessorum suorum consuetudinem venerabiliora & pretiosiora nova sua machinatione facere &c.* Asser Annal. Rer. Gest. Ælf. pag. 43.

^b See a MS. Roll in the Library of Corpus Christi College Oxon. signed by Sr Gilbert Dethyck Garter, and the other Kings of Arms; 7. E. 6. which gives him a Cross Fitché. And in a MS. of Mr Brian Twyne's in the University Archives, I find this note. *King Alfred's Arms sent unto me out of Ireland, by Mr Usher. He beareth Azure a Cross Patée Or.* ✠ Twyne MS. Antiquar. 2. Pag. 240.

firm that it belonged to any of his predecessors, I find no authority upon which I can safely depend.

The reader will observe, that I take one thing for granted, which indeed cannot be so clearly demonstrated, viz. That the Cross immediately succeeded in the room of the Horse. But this liberty I hope our Heralds will indulge me in, till they can find something which has a better pretence to it's place. At what time it began to be received, seems in truth the only question. Shall we say that each of the Saxon Princes took it immediately upon his conversion to Christianity? Then it was not universally received at one time, because they were not all converted at once: so that this determines nothing. But there is good reason to think, it was not then the practice, at least here in England, to model the Standard so exactly to their faith. However fond they might be of the religion which they had just embraced, I will undertake to prove they were as much attached to their ancient lineage; and to discard the White Horse, would have been little less, than renouncing their Saxon descent. Let us form a judgment of what they might have done in this case, from the behaviour of their kinsmen in Old Saxony; because, it may be presumed, they both had the same customs. Witikind thought his ancient badge no bar to his Christianity; because he is said to have born the White Horse after his conversion: and I will venture to say, before too; without spending time to confute those, who can believe he ever bore a Black One.

Egbert the West-Saxon, who lived some time after Witikind, is the ^a first, who is expressly said to have born the Cross. The reason of conversion cannot be urged in his case, because he

^a See the quotation below from Nicolas Upton De Off. Milit.

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was

was bred a Christian, nor can I find any other reason from the whole history of his life. Whether it was his business to unite the Seven kingdoms under one Banner, will admit of a dispute; but it could be neither interest nor policy in him to alter the old one: which I must still believe to have been the White Horse, and shall be obliged to any one, who can inform me better.

Ethelwolph, his son and successor, may with much more reason be thought to have made the alteration: because in his time, an army of infidels, who had only appeared upon the coasts in the reign of his father, had now gained a settlement in the Island, tho' their conquests were not yet arrived to any great height. The good correspondence which this King maintained with the Court of Rome, from whence the change may be thought to have proceeded, will afford us another argument in his favour. But still I cannot persuade myself, that the Cross was received in his lifetime, but that it was reserved for one of his successors. The reigns of his three eldest sons were short, and full of troubles; and perhaps gave no leisure for things of this sort. But the fourth, and most active of them all, cannot but be thought the most likely person to make the alteration, because no King of England before him ever had the like reason.

The Danes in his time began not only to be formidable to the natives in general; but the West Saxon Kingdom itself was entirely overrun by them. Then it was, that the piety of King

a *Rome quoque omni anno magnam pro anima sua pecuniam, id est, Trecentas Mancussas, portare præcepit, quæ taliter dividerentur: scilicet Centum Mancussas in honorem S. Petri; centum Mancussas in honorem S. Pauli; centum quoque Mancussas universali Papæ Apostolico.* Asser. Pag. 13. He is said besides to have made more than one journey to Rome, and to have staid there a whole year at one time. A.D. 855.

Alfred

Alfred first taught his subjects to pique themselves upon their profession; and this in order to obtain success against their enemies. We may observe, that though the Saxon Annals, and other writers, call that people Danes, from the time of their first arrival in England; yet his own ^a historian as he generally calls the Saxons Christians, so he gives the Danes no other name than that of Pagans; which could hardly happen without design. That religion was the main thing in dispute between them, appears further from Alfred's behaviour to the Danes after they were worsted. For we find him willing to come to the easiest terms with them, provided only that they would receive the Christian faith: as in the case of ^b King Guthrum, and his nobles. This indeed was in effect to bring them off insensibly from their barbarous and brutal customs; to persuade them to live under a more orderly rule, and to qualify themselves for being incorporated with the Saxons. So that here in England was an *Holy War* in the best sense of the word, earlier by above two hundred years than the first Crusade; and begun by that prince upon no idle motive; but upon the noblest principles, the defence of his own subjects, and the conversion of his enemies. And if we judge from the like instances, we must believe that all the preparations for the war had regard to the chief point; and that the Standard in particular was adapted to the occasion.

^a Asser Menevensis Annales rerum gestarum Ælfredi Magni.

^b Nec non & Godrum rex eorum Christianitatem subire, & baptismum sub manu Ælfredi regis accipere promisit: quæ omnia ille & sui, ut promiserant, impleverunt. Nam post hebdomadas septem, Godrum Paganorum rex cum Triginta electissimis de exercitu suo Viris ad Ælfred regem prope Æthalingæg, in loco qui dicitur Alre pervenit, quem Ælfred Rex in filium adoptionis sibi suscipiens, de fonte sacro baptismatis elevarit; cujus Chrismatis solutio octavo die in villa regia quæ dicitur Wædmor fuit: qui postquam baptizatus fuit duodecim noctibus cum rege mansit; cui rex cum suis omnibus multa & optima ædificia largitus est. Asser. Pag. 34, 35.

If I might be permitted to be a little more exact as to time; I would say that the alteration of the banner began in the year 883, the time of King Alfred's "receiving from Pope Marinus or Martin II, that part of our Saviour's Cross, which he afterwards ^b repositied in Glastonbury Abbey. And perhaps authors who have wrote of Heraldry have often had no better grounds for their assertions.

That it was not unusual at that time of day for Princes and States to change their old banner, for a new one of the Pope's recommending, is pretty plain from the instance of the Bulgarians. These applied to Pope Nicholas I. who sat in the chair from A.D. 858, to A.D. 867. for a proper banner in the room of their old one, or the *Horse's Tail*; and received for answer, *What Ensign ought ye to bear, but the Sign of the Holy Cross? — This is that ensign of our faith, which Christian Princes always make use of in their necessities, and by which Kings professing the true religion often gain with Christ's assistance remarkable victories over their enemies.* Nothing can be more exactly suited to King Alfred's circumstances than this passage: and if he applied in the same manner to the Pope, we can-

^a Qui etiam [Marinus] multa dona predicto regi illa vice transmisit, inter que dedit non parvam illius *SANCTISSIMÆ AC VENERABILISSIMÆ CRUCIS* partem, in qua Dominus noster Jesus Christus pro universali hominum salute pependit. Asser. Pag. 39.

^b Alfredus sive Aluredus dedit partem de Ligno Domini. Monasticon Anglic. Vol. I. Pag. 10.

^c Quando prælum inire soliti eratis, indicatis vos hætenus in signo militari *CAUDAM EQUI* portasse, & sciscitami quid nunc vice illius portare debeatis. Quid aliud uique nisi signum *SANCTÆ CRUCIS*? Ipsum est enim quo Moyses mare divisit, & Amalec interfecit; quo Gedeon Madianitas superavit; & Christus Dominus noster Diabolum, qui habebat mortis imperium, non solum superavit, sed prostravit. Ipsum est signum quod portamus in frontibus nostris: ipso à cunctis defendimur hostibus, & ab omnibus munimur incursionibus. Hoc est signum Fidei, & ingens horror diaboli, quo Christiani principes in necessitatibus suis semper utuntur, & reges veram religionem sectantes, sæpe celebres Christo propitio triumphos de hostibus operantur. Nicolai I. Responsa ad Consulta Bulgarorum. Artic. 33. Vide *CONCILIA*. Par. 1644. Tom. XXII. Pag. 455.

not but conclude that he likewise received the same answer. Perhaps it may add some weight to this argument, when it is remembred, that Marinus himself, before he came to the Popedom, was the very person ^a employed on this occasion by Nicholas I. to negotiate affairs with the Bulgarians.

King Alfred came behind none of his contemporaries in his compliments to the Holy See, and had particular ^b reasons for so doing. Besides the tribute, which his Father had made payable to Rome from the West-Saxon kingdom; we find him the same year in which he received that relick of the Cross, ^c sending thither a present or *Alms*, as it is there called, *which he had vowed*; and 'tis remarked under that year, that *affairs succeeded prosperously with him after the performance of his vows*. This Present seems to have been continued for several years after, being mentioned A.D. 887, 888, 890, and as a particular piece of respect, it is said to have been carried by persons of note and distinction, whose names are likewise recorded. Vows are commonly made by persons in distress, and performed upon extraordinary deliverances; and this was often the case of that Prince. As this account of performing his vows, immediately follows that of receiving the relick, it may justly be thought to bear some relation to it. And if he attributed an extraordinary virtue to the relick, as from his known ^d practice, we

^a Baronii Annales Ecclesiastici. Moguntiae 1601. Tom. XI. Pag. 366.

^b Leo Papa IV. Apostolicæ sedis præerat, qui præfatum infantem Ælfredum oppido ordinans unxit in Regem, & in filium adoptionis sibi met accipiens confirmavit. Affer. p. 7.

^c DCCCLXXXIII. Marinar mæra Papa sende þa Lignum Domini Ælfreðe cý-ninge. And þý ilcan geape læbbe Sigheilm. 7 Æþelstan þa ælmeþran to Rome. þe Ælfreð cing gehet ðibep. and eac to Sce Dome. 7 to Sce Barðolomee. Ða hi jætton þið þone hepe æt Lundene. 7 hi þær Godeþ þancer 7 þýþe bentigðe pænon æfter þam gehatum. Annal. Saxon. Pag. 86, 87.

^d Erat sedulus sanctorum locorum visitator etiam ab infantia orandi & eleemosynam dandi gratia.
— Sapiſſime galli cantu & matutinis horis clam conſurgens, eccleſias & RELIQUIAS
SAN.

have all the reason in the world to think he did; we can hardly doubt, but in imitation of other Christian Princes, he then, if ever, first took the Cross for his Banner.

That there was any real virtue in the relick, I will not pretend to say; but the new banner, if it was such, may be thought to have given new life to the Souldiery. For Alfred during the remainder of his reign came off conqueror in almost every engagement. Under this Prince, who was the restorer of the Saxon valour by land, and the founder of the Nation's power by Sea, I suppose, the Cross became the badge of the Fleet, as well as of the Army; and is still preserved in the present cognifance of the Royal Navy. For I think it would be derogating from the ancient honour of the British Flag, to derive it's original from any other monarch.

*The Cross the Arms
of the West-Saxon
Monarchs.*

The learned ^a St Henry Spelman will not allow that any of our Saxon Kings had Arms strictly speaking, and as they are commonly depicted on a Shield. And very justly finds fault with our Heralds, for describing them in the usual terms of Blazonry. But yet he allows, because it cannot be denied, that they had a ^b Banner in time of war. And that the figure in the banner must have been pourtrayed

SANCTORUM orandi causa visitabat, ibique diu prostratus orabat. Affer. Annal. Rer. Gest. Ælfr. pag. 40, 41. *Necnon sacramentum in omnibus RELIQUIIS, QUIBUS ILLE REX MAXIME POST DOMINUM CONFIDEBAT, juravit.* Idem. pag. 28.

^a *Repetunt Danicorum, Anglo-Saxonum, Britannorumque regum arma absoluta speciosa serie passim edita. Commentum plane omnino otiosum, aut veterum Heraldorum, aut quod forte magis arideat monachorum. Qui, (ut Histriones & Pictores solent) antiquorum pro ætatis sue ritu effingentes clypeos item instructissimos cuique addiderunt.* D. Henr. Spelman. *Aspilogia.* Fol. Lond. 1654. Pag. 41.

^b *Signa procul dubio militaria, quæ in acie ordines sequerentur, vel regibus nostris veterrimis defuisse non est cogitandum. Hoc evicit militaris ipsa necessitas, etiam Bedæ autoritas.* Idem ibid.

upon

upon some Ground, is altogether consistent with reason, and rules of art; and This is what we call the Field in an escutcheon. Though therefore he had reason to deny our Saxon Kings Arms in the modern acceptation of the word, and tho' he could find upon stone monuments nothing of this sort, so old as those times; Yet, I presume, had he been aware that such a monument as that of the Horse, would have been afterward discovered, he would readily have allowed it to be the Arms or Banner of the West-Saxon kingdom.

^a Nicolas Upton one of our oldest heraldick writers, from whom most of the moderns have borrowed what they say on this subject, has given our most ancient Kings, and some whose names are only to be met with in fabulous history, their respective Arms. For which reason, though, I own, his authority bears but little weight with me in matters of such distant antiquity, yet in the case before us, I think he has proceeded with caution and judgment. He does not indeed give the least hint about the Saxon Horse; That was too far removed from his enquiry; but he seems by some means or other to have discovered, that the Cross belonged to our West-Saxon

^a *Nicolaus Uppodunus, juris consultus, Cæsarum ac Pontificum Romanorum decreta exquisita excutiebatur, ediscebat, industria; tandemque Severianæ & Fontanæ factus ecclesiæ canonicus, ad scribendum animum appulit. Erat tunc temporis in pretio Hunfridus Dux Claudianus, literatorum decus plane maximum, cui & Uppodunus eruditionis nomine gratus. Cliens igitur justam gratulandi patrono querens occasionem, concinnavit libros quatuor de Re Militari & Factis illustribus, quorum qui ultimus est, de Insignibus Anglorum Nobilium tractat. Jo. Leland. de Script. Britan. 8vo. Oxon. 1709. Pag. 444.*

^b *BRUTUS portavit Unum Leonem rubeum pedesantem in campo Aureo. ALBANACT Unum Leonem Rubeum rapacem in campo aureo. CAMBER Duos Leones rubeos facies suas ad terga vertentes in campo argenteo. BELINUS Tres coronas aureas in campo Azorio. UTER Duos Dracones virides, Coronis rubeis coronatos, Terga ad invicem vertentes in Campo aureo. CADWALLADER portavit in numeris suis Unam Crucem Patensem Figitivam auream campo Azorio. Nic. Upton. De Offic. Milit. Fol. Lond. 1654. Lib. IV. pag. 126, 127, 128.*

Mo-

Monarchs, and therefore, with propriety, as he thought, "attributed it to Egbert their founder. He calls it *Azure a Cross Fleuree Or*. But regard must be had to the time in which he wrote, when Armory was become a learned science, whereas it had scarce a being in the Saxon times. Those numberless distinctions of Crosses and Fields, being the product of later ages, the fruits of Crusades.

These Arms according to Upton, were born by all the successors of Egbert down to Edward the Confessor, when he tells us, an alteration was made in them; and this is the addition of four or five birds to the Cross, for which he ^b gives but an indifferent reason. But the learned Knight before-mentioned is unwilling to agree with him in this point, and seems to say ^c the falsifiers stole this notion from the coins of that Prince. Yet if Princes have varied the national banner, as they have

^a Egbertus portavit *UNAM CRUCEM FLORIDAM IN CAMPO AZORIO*; *Que Arma erant continuata & portata per omnes Reges sequentes usque ad tempora Sancti Edwardi Confessoris.* Nic. Upton de Officio Militari. Fol. Lond. 1654. Lib. IV. Pag. 128.

^b Edwardus Confessor portavit in Armis suis *UNAM CRUCEM FLORIDAM IN CAMPO AZORIO*, & quia spoliatus antea fuerat per Danos, assumpsit *QUINQUE MERULOS AUREOS*, portans eos sine pedibus: quia vocabatur ipse, Edwardus sine Terra, quare portavit dictos merulos sine pedibus. Nic. Upton de Off. Mil. pag. 129.

^c Sed extant audio Saxonum Regum Arma antiquo opere: Clypeus cyaneus Cruce Florida Quinque inter Apodes ex auro. Saxonum revera hunc nulli erexit Antiquitas, quin Divo quem vocant Edwardo, eorum ultimo. Cui nec sua negabo Arma, cum is in Normannia diu versaretur. — Veruntamen & hic in suspicionem veniant fallaces isti, utpote Scutum istud ex argenteis ejus nummis effinxisse. Habent enim nummi sui inter Aves quatuor bacillos totidem se invicem instar Crucis dissecantes, ut ex subiecta Icone. D. H. Spel. Aspil. pag. 42. — Alites autem vides non Apodes sed Antipodes esse. Et adjungam, nusquam locorum Edwardi ævum referentium (si omnem antiquitatem, templa, castra, monumenta, rudera, perlustraveris) reperiri credo, neque arma ista, nec armorum quidpiam. Certe ejus tempestatis reliquæ, ne simplicis Scuti, (quam unquam viderim, etiam data opera) effigiem admittunt. Ne nummi quidem, ne illustrium Saxonum tumuli elegantes, ne ipsius Edwardi Sigillum Regium, ne sepulcrum ejus sumptu magnifico magistraque manu denuo restauratum. Forte hoc idem alius affirmaverit de ætatibus Will. I. & II. sed nos id modestius & abstinenter. Idem.

ever done at particular times, and for particular reasons; it cannot be thought improbable, that the Confessor, in whose time many of our customs began to be changed, should make the above-mentioned addition. For the notion of these being his Arms, could not easily be passed upon the people, had there not been some grounds for it. And besides if it was a forgery, it must have begun in a dark age, when perhaps the wisest were scarce able to distinguish the Confessors money, from that of his predecessors.

The present learned "Garter King of Arms has proved beyond dispute, that it was between three and four hundred years ago the common persuasion, not only among vulgar persons, but princes themselves, that the Cross and Blackbirds, Martlets, or Doves, as they are called by different writers, were the Arms of the Confessor. He has shewn from our Historians how King Richard the Second came to choose the Confessor for his tutelar saint, in his expedition against the Irish; and for that purpose to add the Arms of that Prince to his own. He has likewise produced an authentick voucher for the truth of this story from the tomb of St Simon Felbrige Standard bearer to Richard the Second, on which is the banner fairly engraved, and agreeably to this account of the historians; the Cross and Five Martlets being empaled with the

a Froissart tells us Vol. 4. pag. 181. That the Irish had great reverence and dread of Edward the Confessor, whereof K. Richard II. receiving information, did upon his expedition into that Country leave off the usage of the Leopards, and the Fleurs de Lis, and took the Arms of that Saint, viz. A Cross Potencee L'Or & de Gules, a quatre Colombes blanc, which induced the Irish to submit to him. J. Anstis Esq. Register of the Garter. 2 Vol. Fol. Lond. 1724. Vol. 2. Pag. 175. But the Chronicle of Melrofs, which he quotes likewise, says, he only added the Confessor's Arms to his own. Et adderet Scuto suo Arma S. Edwardi. Chron. Melrofs de Ferali Parlamento inter MSS. Will. Petyt Int. Templ. See likewise Walsingham. Hist. A.D. 1398. Pag. 355. The learned author himself blazons the Confessor's Arms thus: Azure, a Cross Flewée Or, between Five Martlets of the Second.

E

Arms

Arms of England. I would therefore beg leave to invert the argument; and instead of proving the Arms to be a forgery taken from the money; I would only prove that this was the Confessor's money, because it has been the constant tradition that the Cross and Birds were his Arms.

S^r. Simon Felbriger Banner.



Thus much, and perhaps more than enough, concerning the Cross of the West-Saxons. It may now be expected, that I give a particular description of it, as it was born before the time of Edward the Confessor; and this, I think, I am able to do from an authentick monument.

*Whiteleaf Cross in
Buckinghamshire.*

Whiteleaf Cross in Buckinghamshire, so called from the hamlet of Whiteleaf in the parish of Monks-Risborough, is an antiquity of the same kind with the White Horse; being formed after the same manner, on the side of an high and steep chalky hill facing the South West. The perpendicular line of the Cross is near 100 feet in length, and about 50 in breadth at the bottom, but decreasing upwards till it scarce exceeds 20 at top. The transverse line is about 70 feet in length, and twelve in breadth and the Trench cut into the chalk is about two or three feet deep. It is formed besides upon a large Basis, whose height

CRVX SAXONIC



W. Greene Jun.^r delin.

Viro amicissimo BROWNE

Ad instaurandum Buckinghamiæ

Tabula



W
sua
Voti

ONICA.



WILLIS Arm. Antiquario
sua decus antiquum.
Votiva.

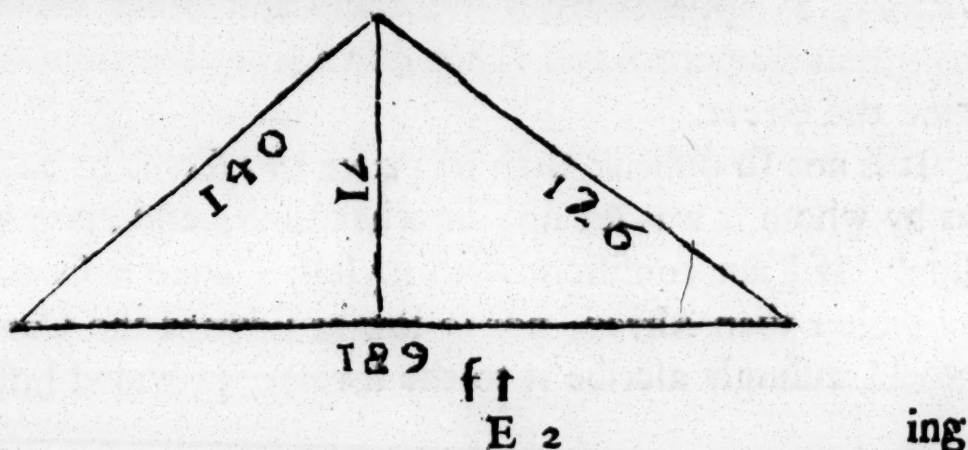
G. Vertue Sculp



height seems to be almost equal to the perpendicular line, with a proportionable breadth, being therefore much more visible than the Cross itself, and of great use to the eye in catching the view at any considerable distance. The common people have learned to call this Base *The Globe*, but I think improperly, it's form approaching nearer to that of a Triangle, as the reader may see in the draught. In one respect the Cross may seem to have the advantage of the Horse, in that it is visible at a greater distance, for I suppose it may be seen, from the White Horse hill itself, there being nothing, that I could observe to obstruct the prospect. Which distance if computed upon the strait Ickle way, which runs under both of them, may for ought I know, amount to near thirty miles.

Though the Cross is in no more danger of being totally obliterated, than the Horse, yet the like custom prevails of Scouring it up with a Festival; but this has of late years observed no regular revolution. The common people still preserve some imperfect traditions concerning contributions raised upon this occasion, and even from some of the Colleges in Oxford. But if any estates have been formerly charged with the expence, time has long since made void the obligation: and the scour-

^a Since I wrote this I received from an ingenious friend, the just Dimensions of the Basis accurately taken by himself, according to the following Diagram,



ing is performed at the expence of the neighbourhood, but never without a merry making.

From this similitude of fabrick and custom, I think we may reasonably conclude, that both are the work of the same age, I had almost said of the same hands. They likewise seem to give a mutual light into the authors of each other. The Horse cannot but be attributed to Saxons; nor the Cross to any but Christian Saxons; and both of pretty near the same times. That the design and meaning of each was the same, is clear from their situation. And whosoever can find in either of them, any thing more or less than the Banner or Arms of England, will have better success than I can pretend to have met with after all my researches.

That the device of the Standard carried with it an omen of victory it were needless further to prove; as well as that no Trophy more proper could be set up, to shew which party were conquerors. The Horse therefore denotes a victory gained by the Saxons over some other people; as the Cross some action in which the Christians prevailed over the Pagans: and since History began, if we except the Saxons themselves we shall find none of the latter in this Island beside the Danes.

Whatever may be the fate of the Horse; it is undeniable that the Cross was both an omen and a customary emblem of victory, as appears from the coins and other monuments of Christian Emperors and Kings down from the time of Constantine the Great.

It is not so difficult then to prove this Cross to be a Trophy, as by whom it was set up; at what time; and upon what occasion. If I am consistent with myself, I cannot fix it's antiquity higher than Alfred, nor so low as Edward the Confessor. I would willingly ascribe it to the former, provided history could
bear

CRUX VICTORIALIS

CONSTANTINVS.M.



Du Cange Fam. Byz. P.21.



Idem Pag. 27.

CONSTANTIVS



Id. Pag. 29.

VALENTINIANVS



Id. Pag. 54.

THEODOSIVS IVN.



Id. Pag. 65.

IUSTINVS



Id. Pag. 88.

IUSTINIANVS



Id. Pag. 88.

IUSTINVS IVN



Id. Pag. 90.

TIBERIVS CONST.



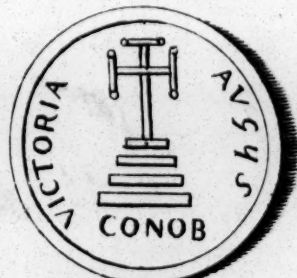
Id. Pag. 102.

HERACLIVS



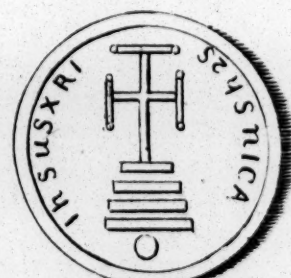
Id. Pag. 112.

LEO ISAVRVS



Id. Pag. 123.

FL. LEO. ob. 911.



Id. Pag. 136.

AVDLFIVS



D. And. Fountaine Tab. 3.

LOTHARIVS



Le Blanc Pag. 62.

DAGOBERTVS



Signu Thome

Id. Pag. 78.



Brenner Num. Suec.



Idem



Idem

eboracensis archiepi.

Cl. Hiches Diss. Epist. Pag. 71.



bear me out a little in the conjecture; and at the lowest estimation, think my self obliged to set it as high as his Son and successor Edward the Elder.

After the death of King Guthrum, which happened A.D. 890, the Danes encouraged by receiving fresh supplies of their countrymen, contrary to their faith and engagements, returned to their old trade of plundering and harrassing the country; taking their opportunities, while the King was employed in defending the Sea coasts, to ravage the West-Saxon and Mercian Kingdoms. And though they now and then paid dear for their perfidy, yet they could not easily be hindered from doing much mischief, as they had their fortified places, where they might secure themselves and their prey at their return. And as the Saxon forces were divided, each Kingdom raising an army to oppose them, as often as they were attacked; and if they had the good fortune to rout them, perhaps seldom pursuing them beyond their own territories; the Danes could not but remain long uncontrouled, though we find them sometimes venturing out a great many miles from their Head quarters. In the year 905 we read of their marching through the Mercian Kingdom as far as Cricklade in Wiltshire, which belonged to the West-Saxons. In the year 921, they are said to have carried off a great many prisoners, and a vast booty of cattle between Ailesbury and Bernwood forest in Buckinghamshire, which extended almost to Oxford. That the Saxons might be provided against these sudden inroads, it was necessary for them to have fortified places upon their great roads; and the remains of one of these appears at Princes Risborough just under the Cross, which the common people now call the *Black Princes palace*. And for my

own part, I make no doubt, but the Cross was made in memory of some victory gained by the troops quartered at this place. There is a village about a mile or two from it, which seems to point out the very spot on which the battel was fought: *Bledelawe* or *Bledlow* for that is the name of it, implying the *Bloudy Hill*. We have an instance exactly parallel to this, in the name of a village and down in Somersetshire called *Bledon* and *Bledon Down* i.e. *Bloudy Down*, from a great slaughter of the Danes, in King Ethelwolphs reign, A.D. 845.

From the accounts which are left us of the life and reign of Edward the Elder, we may collect that they came not much short of his fathers in martial atchievements; and that they deserved to be transmitted to us in a much better manner than we find them. It was the fault of the historians of that age cursorily to run over some of the most remarkable events. After a battle has been related, we are now and then, unable to find out which party gained the advantage. Sometimes we are hurried from one action to another, without proper notice of time intervening. Nay there are two set battles of this reign mentioned without the circumstance of place, which certainly ought never to be omitted. The one A.D. 911, when the Northumbrian Danes taking advantage of the Kings being in Kent, invaded the Mercian Kingdom; but he soon raised an army of Mercians and West-Saxons, whom he ordered out against them, and the Danes in their return were overtaken by them; when a battle ensued, wherein two Danish Kings Eowils and Halfdene, with several nobles, and many thousands of common men were slain, and the army entirely routed. The Saxon Annals, as I said, do not mark out the place, but

^a See the Notes to *A Compleat History of England*. Fol. Lond. 1706. Vol. I. pag. 53

^a Ethel-

* Ethelward an old historian, tho' something later than the *Analist*, tells us it was at Wodnesfeld; but where to look for that place I know not. The other battle was in the year 905, when, as I mentioned before, the East Angle Danes penetrated through the Mercian into the West-Saxon Kingdom as far as Cricklade and Bredon forest, plundering and ravaging the country. In the mean time King Edward, as soon as he could get his army together, pursued them, and in requital as he marched, spoiled the East Angle territories that lay between the Dike and the Ouse in Northamptonshire, still directing his march after them; but being deserted by the Kentish men, if I understand the story right, unwilling perhaps to follow him so far from their own home, presently after, but where it is not said, the Saxons were surrounded by the Danish army, I suppose, in their return, and consequently forced to fight at a great disadvantage. In this battle the Saxons lost a great number of men, and the Danes a greater; tho' the latter kept the field of battle; so that it can hardly be called a victory on the side of the Saxons. Yet what might make it equivalent to a victory, was not only the death of Eoric the Danish King and some of his nobles, but Æthelwald Ætheling, King Edward's Cousin german, who had set himself up for King of the West-Saxons, and to support himself the better, had instigated the Danes to this revolt, was there likewise slain, and an end put to his rebellion.

Whether this battle was fought at Bledlow, I shall leave to the disquisition of others; but must observe, that Bledlow lies in the Danes rout homewards from Bredon forest to the East Angles, and upon a great Roman road too, which it may be

* *Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores post Bedam à D. Henr. Savile editi. Fol. Francof. 1601. Pag. 848.*

presumed they generally chose for the more speedy and easy marching of their troops; and that the Saxons, if they had been more beaten than they seem to have been, might easily retreat from thence to their fastness at Prince's Risborough, and still look upon themselves as Conquerors.

*The Coin of
Audulfus.*

I am aware of one objection, which perhaps might have been overlooked by others, that may be made against all I have said; and this is, that the Cross appears to have been used by the Saxons for a trophy long before the times of Alfred and Edward the elder. Among the Saxon ^a coins we find one with this inscription VICTVRIA ADVLFO, and the figure of the Cross plainly designed for a banner or trophy. The professed masters of this learning have ascribed the coin to Aldwulphus King of the East Angles, of whom little more is remarked, than that he began his reign A.D. 665, and died 683. It may be thought presumption in me to dispute a point, wherein the learned seem to be so well agreed; but I cannot help saying, that I neither believe the coin to be of that age, nor of this nation. It is a question too long to be discussed in this place, whether we had any minted money so early as that time, at least of that form in which the Saxon money commonly appears. ^b Mr Camden indeed tells us, that the oldest coins which he had seen, were of Ethelbert the first Christian King of Kent; but neither has he himself given us any of that prince, nor Mr Speed, who more particularly made it his business, and had besides the assistance of Sr Robert Cotton and other able antiquaries of that time; nor have later

^a Speed's Chronicle. Fol. Lond. 1611. Pag. 310. Mr Walker's account of the Saxon Coins in the new edition of the Britannia. Tab. V. 20. Sr Andrew Fountain's Saxon Coins at the end of Dr Hickes's Thesaurus. Fol. Oxon. 1703.

^b Remains concerning Britain. 4to. Lond. 1614. Pag. 200.

antiquaries with all their diligence met with any better success. If we examine this coin more narrowly, we shall find it very different from other Saxon coins; among all those given us by the learned Sr Andrew Fountaine, there being not one like it, either as to the emblem, or the Legend. The name of the King as it is inscribed on the coin, scarce agrees with itself, and not at all with the Historians. For though ADVLFVS, with the broad A, if it is such, may be allowed to be the same as AV-DVLFVS; yet it can never mean ALDVLFVS, because there is so material a letter omitted, and that not by mistake of the mintmaster, as, from the word occurring twice, we may be pretty well assured. Besides if it was designed for a Saxon Prince, perhaps it would have been wrote EALDVVLFVS: and some affinity with the Saxon character might have been expected. From the money of Lotharius King of France, who reigned A.D. 584. and from those of Dagobert A.D. 628, with the same legend, VICTVRIA HLOTARII, VICTVRIA DAGOBERTO. the coin may rather seem to be of that age and nation, or of some Lombard King whose name has not had the good fortune to be preserved in history. Unless perhaps it may be still older, and be thought to have been struck by ATVLFVS, the successor of Alaric, a civilized Goth, who married Placidia the Emperor Honorius's sister. ^a Jornandes calls him ATAVVLFVS, ^b Paulus Diaconus ATAVLFVS, which I suppose to be the antiquated spelling of ADVLFVS or ADOLPHVS. The way of writing VICTVRIA for VICTORIA may well be derived from the Goths, if it was not otherwise common to all nations of that age; for we find on the coins of Baduela, FLEYREAS ZEM-

^a *Regnumque Ataulfo ejus [Alarici] consanguineo & forma & mente conspicuo tradunt.* Jornandes de Rebus Geticis.

^b Paul. Diacon. Hist. Miscel. Lib. XIII.

PER instead of FLOREAS SEMPER. On the head side of Mr Speed's coin are the letters FRISIN. which ^a Mr Walker has made PRISIN. and which St Andrew Fountaine therefore owns were unintelligible to him. But had he followed Mr Speeds reading, I doubt not, but he would with me have taken it for FRISINGA or FRISINGVM, if that word was used so anciently for *Frisingen* in Germany, which I presume was under the dominion of Ataulfus at that time. It was usual with the Goths in Spain, as well as the Franks, to inscribe the name of the town, where the money was minted; of which we may find a great many examples in ^b Le Blanc.

*The Altar of
the Cross.*

I just mentioned before the Base on which the Cross is erected, and that it's form came near to that of a Triangle. This is an essential part of the monument, and, I think, ought to be called the *Altar of the Cross*. The common people indeed know no other name for it than *The Globe*, nor do I doubt their veracity in adhering to what they have been taught to call it; though, I fear, not by the first authors of the monument. It is a point of no very great consequence, whether it be a Globe or an Altar, because both are exhibited on monuments of the most early times; and the appearance it bears, is the only reason with me for calling it by the latter name. It will be more to our purpose briefly to shew the relation, which both the one and the other bear to the Cross; and the analogy between the Cross itself and Victory.

The Goddess of Victory whose image was set up in many parts of heathen Rome, had perhaps more honours and devotion paid to her, than any other deity of the Romans, as they were in a continual state of war with some one or other people,

^a See the Saxon Coins in the new Edition of the Britannia. Tab.V.

^b Traite Historique des Monnoyes de France. 4to. à Amsterdam. 1692 Pag. 59, 60.

that

that bordered upon that vast empire. But when ^a Constantine after his victory over Maxentius, had ascribed the whole success to our Saviour's Cross, the credit of the Goddess began to decline, and after several efforts to retrieve it, at last was entirely sunk. The Cross by degrees became entitled to all her honours and privileges: and the Souldiers learnt to put an entire confidence in it, as appears from their usual ^b shout at the onset of battle VICTORIA CRVCIS!

The Goddess of Victory was most commonly painted with wings, and standing sometimes on a Globe, at other times on an Altar; which is the reason, why we see both the Globe and the Altar surmounted by the Cross. We may remember what ^c heats were raised in the fourth century, about the Altar of Victory, alternately removed and restored, by five or six Emperors succeeding each other. The first removal was under Constans the son of Constantine, the father perhaps finding it too difficult a task to abolish all the monuments of Pagan superstition at once. And this seems to be the true reason, why, as a late excellent ^d writer observes, his religion is so hard to be determined from his coins. For though he really attributed his own success to the efficacy of the Cross, yet we frequently find him on his money, holding in one hand the old Pagan deity, a winged Victory, and in the other the banner of the Cross; as if he designed a sort of compromise between the Votaries of each.

^a Eusebius De Vita Constant. Lib. III. Cap. 28, 29.

^b Cum vero jam ad conflictationem movet exercitus, consueta Christianis vox usurpanda est, ΝΙΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΥ. Leonis Imperatoris Tactica. à Meursio edita. 4to. Lugd. Bat. 1612. Cap. XII. Pag. 155.

^c S. Ambrosii Opera. Fol. Parisiis. 1690. Tom. II. Pag. 828, 829, &c

^d Mr Addison's Dialogues upon ancient Medals. See his Works 4to. Lond. 1721. Vol. I. pag. 537.

The Altar of Victory was of a Cylindrical form, adorned with festoons and bas reliefs, if we may form our notions from that draught of it given us by * Montfaucon from Maffeus. But the Altar of the Cross was of a plainer figure, and more adapted to the simplicity of the Christian profession. It is commonly expressed by a flight of steps gradually decreasing towards the top, on which the Cross is erected. Its use began at the declension of the arts; and therefore it must be reckoned the fault of the age, where it is described in no very just perspective view; as in our Monument; on some of the coins of the northern nations; and in subscriptions to ancient charters, where it has been still more hastily and rudely delineated.

*Other Monuments
of the same kind.*

These two monuments, than which perhaps no country can shew two more remarkable, are now, with some justice I hope, restored to our Saxon ancestors: the manner of their fabrick seeming to be peculiar to the times I have been speaking of. And if antiquaries would direct their enquiries this way, probably they would find no reason to repent of their labour; tho' no more of this sort and of the same antiquity have come within my observation. I say of this sort, and of the same antiquity: for it would be a manifest affront to common sense, to put These upon the same level with some others, which at best can be called only pitiful imitations of such excellent originals. For I must insist upon it, that these are no vulgar works, but made by publick authority.

And here the magnificence of our Saxon princes displays itself to the greatest advantage; as it is a magnificence tempered with frugality. To erect Trophies, at so trifling an ex-

* Montfaucon *Antiquité Expliquée*. Fol. Lut. 1719. Vol. I. Pag. 344.

pence,

pence, which should continue to be witnesses of their actions, fresh and visible, at the distance of so many miles, and so many ages! What more, if indeed so much, could have been done, by erecting the most costly edifices?

As for those lesser works of shepherds and others, to all but the ignorant they are sufficiently distinguished by their meanness; being cut upon downs and plains, where their employment led them, without regard to soil or situation, and scarce ever to be surveyed at a distance. There are indeed some of a middle class, which have gained a name, and by novices in the study of antiquity have been placed in the same rank with our Horse and Cross: therefore to bestow a sentence or two upon them, cannot be thought foreign to my present purpose.

*The White Horse
of Bratton-Castle
in Wiltshire.*

There is a monument of this kind, which I once imagined would have confirmed my opinion beyond all possibility of doubt; though I had the mortification afterwards to find myself disappointed. In the neighbourhood of Edington in Wiltshire, the place where Alfred gained the second most remarkable victory of his life, is a White Horse cut on the side of an high and steep hill, and under a large Roman fortification called Bratton-Castle, from the neighbouring town of Bratton: so that in this respect 'tis not unlike the Berkshire Horse. Bratton Castle is likewise the very place, whither, as antiquaries agree, Alfred after the battle pursued Guthrum the Danish King, and after a siege of fourteen days brought him to surrender: and this was another strong reason for referring it to the time of that prince. Notwithstanding which I must give my readers a caution about it. For did not

* See the Additions to the Britannia in Wiltshire.

the fabrick discover it to be modern, yet the inhabitants of Westbury, a borough town about a mile from it, who made it, and instituted a revel or festival thereupon, might inform them as much; it having been wrought within the memory of persons now living, or but very lately dead. Yet still I think it may deserve the enquiry of others, who have more leisure than myself; How the common people came to be so fortunate in their choice of the ground? and whether the authors of it had not preserved the tradition of some older Horse, now obliterated; and of some more ancient festival now forgot?

The Giant of Cerne-Abbey in Dorsetshire. In the parish of Cerne-Abbey in Dorsetshire is the figure of a Giant, cut on a sidelong hill, but not to

be seen at any great distance. This, though it may be of some antiquity, yet cannot lay claim to any thing like that of the Horse or Cross. I had not time to examine the tradition concerning it, which is fabulous, nor could I learn, that it used to be scoured up with a festival like the former. I thought it not proper to pass it by without mentioning it; but shall not endeavour at it's meaning, lest I may be thought to invade the province of a gentleman, who, as I hear, has undertaken to to write the history and antiquities of that county.

The Red Horse of Warwickshire. The Red Horse is a monument of much greater note than the two last mentioned, as giving name to a Vale in Warwickshire:

a Within the precinct of that manour of Tishoe now belonging to the Earl of Northampton (but antiently to the family of Stafford as I have shewed) there is cut upon the side of Edg-Hill the proportion of a Horse in a very large forme; which by reason of the ruddy colour of the earth is called the Red Horse, and giveth denomination to that fruitful and pleasant country thereabouts, commonly called THE VALE OF RED HORSE: The trenches of which ground where the shape of the said Horse is so cut out, being yearly scoured by a Free-holder in this Lordship, who holds certain lands there by that service. Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire. Lond. 1656. Pag. 422.

but

but this is not of the same extent with the Berkshire Vale, nor is it's name, or the antiquity of it, so universally acknowledged. The Horse itself is vastly inferiour in every respect; in it's design, dimensions, fabrick, and situation: being hardly visible at a distance. The whole betrays itself, to be the work of a later age, and more rude workmen: and I can readily join with ^a Mr Camden, in allowing it to be made by the country people, and not by publick authority. However, I am persuaded, it is not without it's meaning: which, since no body has hitherto thought it worth while, I will now endeavour to explain.

I think it then, as I said before, to be the work of a private person: that person, whosoever he was, I take to have been some retainer to S^r Richard Nevil, the stout Earl of Warwick, so famous in our English history during the disputes between the two Houses of Lancaster and York, whose castle stands at about nine or ten miles distance, facing the Hill on which the Horse is cut: and that the Horse was made in memory of the bloudest battle ever fought between the two houses; wherein the Earl of Warwick had the greatest share, and particularly distinguished himself, by killing his own Horse just before the engagement, declaring himself determined to die or conquer. This battle was fought at Towton in Yorkshire, upon Palm Sunday A.D. 1461; and is called by our ^b historians *Towton Field*, or *Palm Sunday Field*. The festival of scouring this Horse, which, the reader will perceive, has given occasion to all this conjecture, is celebrated by a vast concourse of people from the neighbouring towns, annually upon Palm Sunday:

^a Britannia in Warwickshire.

^b Hollingshead's History of England. Fol. Lond. 1587. Vol. 2. Pag. 664. Stow's Annals of England. 4to. Lond. 1601. Pag. 690.

and the Red-Horse-farm, which is said to be charged with the expence of scouring it, is now in the possession of the R^t Honourable James Earl of Northampton.

Whether the name, Red Horse, bore any allusion to the colour of Earl Nevil's Horse, I will not venture to say, though even that is not improbable. For any thing that now appears, it was taken from the colour of the soil: and had that happened to be black, the Horse must have been called a Black one. But whosoever shall give himself the trouble to think a little upon this subject, will, I believe, agree with me that the colour would hardly have been mentioned at all, but to distinguish it from another Horse that was in being before it. The Red Horse together with it's ancestor the White one, have indeed been the unlucky occasion of much error; tho' neither of them has any thing to answer for upon that account. For if from hence any persons have entertained an idle conceit, that Horses are the patrons of Vales, I hope this will not be laid to the charge of the monuments, or their authors: nor that others have conceived, because the Red Horse was denominated from the soil, that therefore the White one must have been so too; for we see there was not the same reason for one as the other. And besides it is unnatural for Englishmen to make use of two words, where one is enough for the purpose. Thus, while there was only one in being, the terms *Horse* and *Vale of the Horse*, would have been sufficient, had there not been a necessity for adding the colour. The Giant at Cerne is never, that I could learn, called the White Giant, nor Whiteleaf Cross, the White Cross; whereas if the colour of the soil, was the only reason for the epithet, they are as much entitled to it as the Horse. In short if there is any weight in what I have urged before, the Berkshire monument was designed

signed to perpetuate a White Horse, the figure in the Royal Banner, and tradition would have been injurious to it, in omitting the colour. Those who still doubt of the truth of this, may be further convinced, if they please, from a very obvious and familiar instance: for this is the reason, why a Horse of that colour, rather than of any other, is one of the most ancient and common Signs, hung out at Inns and houses of publick entertainment in this Kingdom. Of a later date, I presume, is the Cross; and still later, the Lions of Normandy. These all preserve their several places on Signposts, but it is owing to an Ignorance of their original meaning, that they have not in their turns been supplanted one by the other, nor all together extruded by the more modern Arms of England.

*Customs of the
Danish times.*

Customs of unknown antiquity instituted to perpetuate certain facts, are a sort of demonstration that such facts really happened, or at least were believed to have happened. And though in some cases time has worn out all memory of the fact, yet we are morally certain, that something was intended to be commemorated by the custom. Of this sort is the festival of scouring the White Horse, which I lay some stress upon, as a thing that may afford a light to the monument. This is an additional advantage, which the reign of Alfred is possessed of, having besides all the pretensions of the reigns of Cerdic and Offa. I believe no one will undertake to shew any similar customs, begun in that of the former; and if there are any of the latter, they have not yet come to my knowledge. There might be anniversary or other periodical commemorations of Saints, Martyrs, and consecrated places, according to the usage of the Church; but this before us is plainly of civil institution, and as far as I can judge, begun in memory of a victory.

If we may refer the commencement of this custom to the time, when we are well assured such rites were most common and in vogue, nor can I tell where to meet with better light in this case; we must go back to that period so often mentioned, inglorious to the Saxon name, and not to be remembered by Englishmen without horror. A Period, the transactions of which, were they not so well attested, would seem the most incredible part of our history. When the Danes perpetrated such a scene of villany here, as is scarce to be parallel'd in the stories of the most savage nations.

The miseries which the Saxons underwent at that time, awaken'd them too late from their lethargy. They found, the common enemy had taken advantage of their divisions, and in less than a century were got to a head, almost too powerful to be opposed, by the united force of the whole kingdom. We may well suppose, that resort was made, as in the like publick calamities, first to the divine power. Prayers and " days of humiliation were appointed, to deprecate God's vengeance, and avert the impending destruction. Providence had indeed sent them, in the person of Alfred, a prince, by whose vigilance and activity they were able to make some stand against them; but the despair he was almost driven to, shewed the necessity there was, of applying to something else besides human means.

The reigns of Alfred and Edward the Elder, stopt the progress of their fury for a while; but several parts of the Island, not immediately under their protection, were harraßed at the

* In the reign of King Ethelred, when the Danish insolence was at it's greatest height, we find a remarkable sermon preached to the Saxons upon a Fast-day, A.D. 1004, by one Bishop Lupus; which according to Mr Wanley is the Latin name of Wolstan, or Wolfstan, Bishop of Worcester. See Dr Hickes's *Diff. Epist. ad D. Barth. Shower*, in the *Thesaurus Ling. Septent.* Pag. 99.

same time with all the circumstances of barbarity. Neither of these princes, we may be assured, was wanting to animate his subjects, by all laudable arts of government; to unite their divisions, quicken the publick spirit, and rouse their valour. And what expedient more effectual could be devised, than that of a publick rejoicing upon every success of their arms?

That this was then the reigning policy, though history does not speak out, is not only probable from the practice of succeeding ages, but is confirmed by several customs, and appellations, which tradition has handed down to us, and which in the judgment of our best antiquaries can plainly belong to no other times. No advantage which the Saxons obtained over these enemies, whether in battle or otherwise, seems to have been left unrecorded. They were particularly industrious in giving new names to places, denoting where every such advantage was gained: and these continue to this day, tho' the several actions have been for many hundred years forgot. Thus the learned ^a Spelman observes, that near Brancaster on the sea coast of Norfolk are several hillocks, or *Tumuli*, the marks of a battle, with a way called *Bloudgate*, which he refers to a slaughter of the Danes, and confirms his opinion by the shrub *Ebulus*, or *Dwarf Elder*, that grows thereabouts in great plenty, and is called by the inhabitants *Danes-Blood*, now more commonly *Daneweed* or *Danewort*. ^b Mr Camden likewise takes notice of a place called *Battlebury* near Warminster in Wilt-

^a *Scenam hic fuisse Martis, clientumque ejus cæmisterium, qui Branoduni, & pro portu patriæ ad castra juxta Creak & Holkham contra Danos militantes occubere. In campis enim de Creak haud procul à cænobio, amplum erigitur sepimentum militare Saxonici operis; à quo decurrens via regia BLOOD-GATE i. e. Sanguinea via, nuncupatur; cruenti illic prælii testimonium. Flabatur & his partibus Ebuli herbæ copia; quam, velut è Danorum exortem sanguine, incolæ DANEBLOOD vocant. Cl. Hen. Spelman. Icenia. Fol. Oxon. 1697. Pag. 149.*

^b *Britannia in Wiltshire.*

shire,

shire, so denominated from some action between the two people. I have already spoken of Bledon in Somersetshire, and Bledlow in Buckinghamshire. There are others still more obvious to every capacity, such as *Kildane* in Essex, *Danesmore*, in Northamptonshire, *Danesbank* in Yorkshire, *Danesfield* in Bedfordshire &c. I mention these as a specimen only, of what antiquaries, if they please, may find in almost every county in the kingdom.

The ^a Tax formerly levied by our kings for the security of the sea coasts against Pyrates, which began in the time of the Danes, and after they ceased to infest the Island, was sometimes, though, but rarely, exacted, and upon great emergencies, yet still preserved it's old name of *Danegeld*. The custom of *Pledging healths* still preserved among Englishmen, is said to be owing to the Saxons mutual regard for each others safety, and as a caution against the treacherous inhospitality of the Danes, when they came to live in peace with the natives. Their inhuman behaviour drew upon them at length the general resentment of the English in King Ethelred's reign: so that in ^b one day they were entirely cut off in a general massacre. And though this did not remain long unrevenge; yet a festival was appointed in memory of it, called ^c *Hok Tuesday*, which

^a Qui igitur principaliter pro Dacis institutus est hic redditus, *DANEGILDUM* vel *DANEGILDUS* dicitur. Hic igitur annua lege, sicut dictum est, sub indigenis regibus solvebatur, usque ad tempora regis Will. I. de gente & genere Normannorum. Ipso namque regnante, tam Daci, quam ceteri terræ marisque prædones hostiles cohibebant incursum. — Cum ergo diu solvisset terra, sub ejusdem regis imperio, noluit hoc ut annum solvi, quod fuerat urgente necessitate bellicæ tempestatis exactum, nec tamen omnino propter inopinatos casus dimitti. Raro igitur temporibus illius, vel successorum ipsius solutus. Gervaf. Tilbur. Dial. de Scaccar. Lib. I. c. XI.

^b St Brice's Day A.D. 1001. Chronicon. Saxonicum. Pag. 133.

^c D. Henr. Spelman. Glossarium. in Voce *HOKDAY*. I find this, amongst other sports, exhibited at Kenilworth Castle by the E. of Leicester, for the entertainment of Q. Elizabeth A.D. 1575. And that there might be nothing wanting that these parts could afford, hither

was kept up in Sr Hen. Spelman's time, and perhaps may be so at present in some parts of England. "The Warwick Antiquary derives its original from the death of the Danish King Hardeknute; but however that be, it is plain he meant the same festival. In short the merciless fury of those miscreants left a lasting impression upon the minds of Englishmen; and though the race of them has been for near seven hundred years extinct among us, yet their name is still fresh in the mouths of the common people: nay the very remains of their dead bodies are^b said to be still preserved at some places, and shewn at this day as a curiosity to strangers.

About the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when people knew no difference between Mahometanism, and downright Paganism; and those expeditions of English princes to the Holy Land were thought a parallel cause to that of opposing the Danes in England; the humour of romancing seems to have taken its rise with us: and our bards accordingly chose the actions of the Saxon times for their theme; blending them with others of a foreign nature, and, with a privilege peculiar to poets, always adorning the history with something great and marvellous. Hence arose those fabulous accounts of the

hither came the Coventre-men, and acted the ancient play long since used in that City, called HOCKS-TUESDAY, setting forth the destruction of the Danes in K. Ethelred's time; with which the Queen was so pleased, that she gave them a Brace of Bucks and five marks in money to bear the charges of a Feast. S. Will. Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire. Lond. 1656. Pag. 166.

a Post eum frater suus Rex Hardeknutus proxime in regno successit, qui obiit quadam die Martis post pascha. Isti Dani in Angliam induxerunt immoderatum modum bibendi. Hardeknuto mortuo liberata est Anglia ex tunc a servitute Danorum. In cujus signum usque hodie illa die vulgariter dicta Hoxtuifday ludunt in villis trahendo cordas partialiter, cum aliis jocis. Joannes Rossus Warwicensis. Historia Regum Angliæ. MS. in Bibl. Bodleiana. MSS. Jones No. I. Fol. 93.

b Journey through England. 3 Volumes 8vo. Lond. 1723. Vol. I. Pag. 86.

heroick

heroick exploits of ^a Saxon champions, and their combats with Danish and Pagan Giants; all tending to animate their countrymen against the Danes and Saracens, in case they should ever make the like attempts upon the Island.

Upon the whole therefore, I cannot perswade myself, that these festivals of scouring the Horse and the Cross, can be ascribed to any age with greater probability than to the Saxon. Nor that these Banners or Arms, for I suppose they will be allowed to be such by all impartial readers, could be set up for any other purpose, than as Ensigns of victory.

The Conclusion. Thus have I endeavoured to support my opinion concerning this noble, but hitherto neglected, monument of antiquity. And this I have done not only by comparing it with others of the same kind, but by removing, as far as I am able, the force of all the objections I could raise myself, or which might seem to be raised against it by others; without levelling my aim at any particular writers, and thereby avoiding, as much as possible, the air of a controversy. Though perhaps for this very reason the present Essay may be thought deficient in that salt and spirit, which is requisite to make an agreeable entertainment. For it must be observed, that the itch of perusing controversial writings, which is so epidemical amongst us, is more owing to an ill-natured curiosity of prying into other people's faults, than to any real desire of being rightly informed. By this means the case of authors is now become little better than that of champions on a stage, who, unless they heartily wound each other, are seldom thought to come off well, and to the satisfaction of the Spectators.

^a Guy of Warwick is said to have lived in the days of King Athelstan: and Bevis of Southampton, to have been born in the Reign of King Edgar.

As for those "gentlemen in disguise, who have been so severe upon my person instead of my performance; if they intended to give me any uneasiness, they have frustrated their own design by abusing me in the best of company. The world has expressed it's detestation of their slander; and the authors have been already sufficiently chastized by a learned, tho' unknown ^b friend. Yet had not his generous resentment forced him upon this disagreeable task, I can assure them, their pamphlet might have remained to this time unanswered for me. For since they are not ashamed to mix dirt and venom with their arguments, such as they are, in defiance of decency and all the laws of fair war: to say nothing harder of them, they are at least too angry to be reasoned with; if they had not likewise some other motive, besides that of setting the publick right in a matter of antiquity. Let either of these be the case, and it cannot be imputed to want of courage, or a bad cause, if I endeavour to avoid such adversaries. As I am not conscious of having deserved this treatment at their hands, so I shall continue to give them no provocation; unless they shall think fit to be provoked at my silence.

^a See *The Impertinence and Imposture of modern antiquaries displayed*, &c. by Philalethes Rusticus, with a preface by another hand. 4to Lond. 1740.

^b An answer to a scandalous Libel entitled *The Impertinence and Imposture of modern antiquaries displayed*, &c. 4to. Lond. 1740.

The E N D.

